

The History of Medicine, Money, and Politics: Riding the Rollercoaster of State Medicine.

Paul R. Goddard. Clinical Press Ltd. July 2008. Paperback, 270pp. £25.00. ISBN: 978-1-85457-050-5

This work essentially represents two parts of a whole. Part one is a medical chronology and the reader is taken on an odyssey, as we chart the evolution of medicine from prehistoric times, through the ancient world, the middle ages, and into our modern world. Goddard writes with impressive authority, and reveals a deep love for learning, not just about medicine, but civilization. The author also invites us to consider the huge intellectual contributions of the Roman, Greek, Chinese and Islamic worlds.

Part one of the book concludes with a consideration of medicine in the Early Modern Period, the genesis of the National Health Service, and that most audacious scheme, the Welfare State. Goddard reminds us how difficult it is for contemporary citizens to imagine health care prior to its inception. Interestingly, he invites comparison with the legal system, “when only the rich and poor have access to the courts,” to remind us what the rest of us, with poor health, faced before 1948.

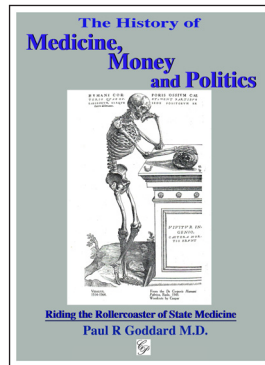
Part two charts the time course of the National Health Service, or as Professor Goddard entitles it, “The Decline of the National Health Service.” In great detail, Harold Shipman, the Bristol Cardiac Scandal, and the Organ Retention investigation are all considered. Professor Goddard, a working consultant in Bristol at the time, was well-placed to appreciate the misery and suffering that these events created, both within and without the medical community.

It is clear that Goddard is not a dispassionate bystander in all of this. Passionate is what he is. The second section pulsates with moral outrage and righteous indignation. His other conviction is that of patient advocacy. The author feels that permeating our physicianly core is duty to our patients. Their advocacy is our responsibility.

A younger readership, reared on tall skinny lattes, MP3 players, and fashion credibility will recoil at the description of numbing on-calls rotas, crippling visceral fatigue, and cynical fiscal exploitation. Older readers will remember, shudder and sob quietly.

It is to Professor Goddard's great credit that he does not trade on his international reputation as a radiologist, or a pioneer of Magnetic Resonance Imaging. In fact, his specialty is barely alluded to. Instead he is everyman's Virgil, guiding the reader through a medical timeline.

To paraphrase Clive James, Paul Goddard's book affirms the truism that some of us are different from the rest of us. But so are the rest of us.



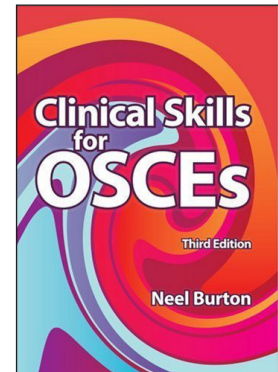
This book will be of great interest to many: students beginning, and practitioners enjoying or enduring their practice. It is also likely to be relevant to medical historians, as it charts one particular small step for mankind.

Barry Kelly

Clinical Skills for OSCEs (Third Edition)

Neel Burton. Scion Publishing Ltd. September 2008. Paperback, 350pp. £24.99. ISBN: 978-1-904842-59-0

This small book should be excellent preparation for medical students undertaking examinations which are now mostly OSCE-based. This book is well laid out, with excellent use of



contrasting colours for the different sections. From my own experience, all the major topics normally used in OSCEs are covered in excellent detail and presentation. The book is up to date, having been published for the 2009 market.

The book is well laid out in sections including General Skills, Cardiovascular and Respiratory Medicine, ENT, Ophthalmology, Dermatology, Psychiatry, Orthopaedics, Obstetrics and much more. The section on communication skills, which are now so important and are a frequent content of the modern OSCE examination, is also well laid out and all the common topics are presented. The authors have included topics such as death certificate completion and data interpretation, so frequently asked.

However, the text is spoiled by major printing errors – after page 115, comes page 84 (duplicated from previously), then pages 118, 119, followed by page 88, then 122, 123, followed by 92, 93, then 126, 127, followed by 96, 97, and so on until page 146; there are many pages inserted out of sync which spoils the entire book. The publishers need to immediately withdraw this print run and correct. If it was not for this major, distracting printing error, this would be an excellent text. More minor critiques are that some photographs lack definition – Fig. 19, page 49, Fig. 38, page 112. On page 48, the addition of a diagram showing laparoscopic incisions would be helpful, e.g. laparoscopic cholecystectomy.

This potentially useful book is spoiled by printing errors. If the printing mistakes are corrected, the content is sound and it would be a useful little book for revision purposes in those anxious few days before the final MB OSCE examination.

Prof Roy A J Spence